



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2006

No. 53

House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, May 8, 2006, at 2 p.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, MAY 5, 2006

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHNNY ISAKSON, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, source of knowledge and wisdom, give us Your truth.

Open our eyes to see Your truth. Strengthen our hearts to face Your truth. Illuminate our spirits to understand Your truth. Fortify our minds to remember Your truth. Give Your Senators today the determination to obey Your truth. Show them what to believe and what to do.

Help us all to listen carefully to Your wise counsel and store up knowledge that transforms lives.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHNNY ISAKSON led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 5, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHNNY ISAKSON, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. ISAKSON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, in a few minutes I will set up votes for next week on several measures that we began to discuss yesterday. Once we set the schedule for next week, we have

some Senators who would like to make statements on those bills and other matters. Therefore, we provided this period today for that purpose.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE LIABILITY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will set up those votes in a bit, but I want to speak to one of the issues that we will be voting on Monday night, and that is the medical malpractice liability issue which, in many ways, is destroying the practice of medicine today. As one who has spent longer in the profession of a physician/doctor than I have in politics, this is something that hurts me as I look to what it is doing to patients, to consumers, to all Americans as it drives up their health care costs unnecessarily, wastefully, but then, even more importantly than that, it affects access to health care. Literally, we have expectant moms today who are having to worry whether there will be an obstetrician there to deliver their baby.

We have right now people who should be worrying, if they are in an accident today driving to work or driving home from work, about whether there will be a trauma surgeon once they arrive at a hospital. That is the threshold we have reached, affecting access, affecting cost, and affecting availability of health care.

A couple years ago, I took my son Harrison, who is in college, to Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Those were the hot States during the last Presidential campaign. I took him to be

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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